

BOB ALLEN • PAUL SCOTT

Oswald's Final Letter: How Did He Know?

WASHINGTON — Four years after the assassination of President Kennedy, the FBI is still investigating a mystery involving the contents of the last letter Lee Harvey Oswald wrote before the Dallas tragedy.

The correspondence, intercepted and read by the FBI before it arrived at its destination, was mailed to the Soviet Embassy here on November 12, 1973 — or 10 days before the assassination.

Written as a request for a Soviet visa, the letter contained a paragraph referring to the highly secret recall of a Cuban official in the Mexico City embassy days after Oswald had visited there and returned to Dallas.

The baffling question the FBI is still trying to answer is: How did Oswald learn about this official's unannounced recall?

The FBI has concluded the information would have had to come to Oswald from one of three sources:

- (1) An informant in the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City who contacted Oswald after he returned to the U.S.; (2) the Central Intelligence Agency; or (3) the KGB, the Soviet Secret police.

Significantly, the FBI inquiry ascertained the CIA and KGB operations in Mexico City learned of the official's recall at approximately the same time and only a week before Oswald wrote his letter, containing the following paragraph: "Of course the Soviet Embassy was not at fault, they were, as I say, unprepared, the Cuban Consul was guilty of a gross breach of regulations. I am glad no has since been replaced."

OSWALD'S INFORMATION

At the time, the FBI agents involved in the intercept copied the text of the letter and put it in Oswald's Washington file with a note that one paragraph verified earlier information on Oswald's Mexico City visit.

The note pointed out that Oswald's mention of "Comrade Kuznetsov" in the letter confirmed a CIA report that he had met with Valeriy Kuznetsov, a Soviet official, in Mexico City.

November. We do not know who might have told Oswald that Azque was to be replaced.

After receiving this reply from the CIA, the Warren Commission's staff made no further inquiry on the Azque reference, but centered their probe on the circumstances under which the letter was prepared and later discovered.

The commission's inquiry into the Oswald letter, most details of which were buried in the 2 volumes of testimony, revealed that Mrs. Ruth Paine, on whose typewriter the final draft was made, and Marina Oswald, knew of the letter and its contents before it was mailed.

Mrs. Paine testified Oswald typed the letter while spending the November 9 weekend at her residence with his wife. After observing the letter when Oswald was not around, Mrs. Paine said she copied it. The commission's record shows she turned the copy over to the FBI on November 23, the day after the assassination.

LETTER INTERCEPTED

An FBI report on file in the National Archives, which has been recently declassified, notes that the agency started its investigation immediately on intercepting Oswald's letter after it was mailed on November 12 in Irving, Tex.

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Four Years After—

Post Has Picked Up Major New Study

By DON BACON

WASHINGTON — Just four years ago, an assassin—or were there more than one?—took the life of President John F. Kennedy.

This week, as sort of an anniversary gesture, the Saturday Evening Post is featuring on its cover a ghostly picture of the late President together with a story inside that purports to be "a major new study" revealing that "three assassins killed Kennedy."

The article, says Post editor William A. Emerson Jr., "demolishes the Warren Report," which was issued by the government 10 months after the Dallas tragedy of Nov. 22, 1963, and which named a distraught, left-wing loner, Lee Harvey Oswald, as the sole assassin.

But does the Post expose "demolish" the Warren Report? Have any of the widely publicized criticisms that have been directed against the Warren Report during the last two years really destroyed its basic conclusions?

ANSWER 'NO'

The answer, to one who has followed the official investigation from the beginning to the end, who has attempted to read what has been said about the case, must be a qualified no.

The report has so far withered the storm stirred by a horde of independent and professional investigators. It has been challenged, to be sure, but it remains still afloat.

It still offers the least complex and most credible explanation of what happened that afternoon as the presidential motorcade made a sharp southwest turn onto Elm St. and drove past the Texas School Depository.

The amateur theories or assassination plots have been dismissed as "wild guesses" and "fantasy."

The Warren Commission, that done its singular purpose, has been disbanded. Its members have been replaced by a new group of investigators.

What they have to do is to find out what happened that afternoon.

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